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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 000992

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

EU not part of Cyprus talks - Verheugen - Hurriyet
A stingy EU offers Euro250 million to TRNC - Milliyet
First day of talks went well: De Soto - Turkiye
Denktas wants Ledra Palace as HQ for new Cyprus government -
Milliyet
A second mullah revolution in Iran - Sabah
Iranian papers critical of Hamanei closed - Sabah
Ankara promises cooperation to NATO's Scheffer - Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

Verheugen: Democracy, law, human rights essential for Cyprus
solution - Radikal
Cyprus talks tough, a long way to peace - Radikal
Papadopoulos says Turkish settlers should leave Cyprus -
Cumhuriyet
US supports Cyprus peace process - Yeni Safak
Perle tough on CIA: Some heads must be chopped - Radikal
Dean throws in towel - Radikal
Mullahs will dominate Iranian parliament - Cumhuriyet
Iran's painful elections - Radikal
Iranian reformist readying for post-election protest - Zaman
NATO should be in Iraq - PM Erdogan - Yeni Safak
Israel denies receiving Syrian peace message - Zaman

BRIEFING

Cyprus: After meeting with the Greek Cypriot leader
Papadopoulos on Thursday morning, Denktas said that the
Greek Cypriot side demanded restriction on the voting rights
of settlers from Turkey. Denktas objected to the demand,
saying that the migrants were TRNC nationals. In return,
Denktas said he asked for establishment of a commission for
investigating the losses that had been suffered by the
Turkish Cypriots between 1963-74. Greek Cypriots are
against a bi-zonal structure based on ethnic grounds, he
added. Papadopoulos has stepped up tension by demanding the
return of the post-1974 settlers to the Turkish mainland,
says "Cumhuriyet." Denktas said at the talks that a three-
year transition period was needed for integrating the TRNC
economy into the economy of south Cyprus, write papers.
Denktas has also demanded \$4 billion for new housing
projects in the North. Gunther Verheugen, the EU's
expansion chief who is in Cyprus for meetings with the
sides, reportedly said that the EU would extend special
financial aid to support the TRNC economy. Both Verheugen
and de Soto have found the talks 'constructive,' and said
that a solution was near, say papers. Foreign Minister Gul
said that Turkey would launch a campaign for recognition of
the TRNC if the Greek Cypriots reject an agreement in the
referendum in late April. Meanwhile, Secretary of State
Powell has asked Athens to continue cooperating with Annan
to achieve a settlement, papers report.

NATO SG visits Ankara: In a meeting with the visiting NATO
Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Foreign Minister

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Gul said that if invited by the Iraqi people, Turkey was
prepared to get involved in the coalition's efforts in Iraq
under a NATO umbrella. However, Scheffer has asked Turkey
to contribute militarily to the ISAF in Afghanistan. Ankara

is not eager to deploy more troops in Afghanistan, and offered Scheffer sending a 50-strong team of military officers and civilian specialists, say papers. Israel denies receiving messages from Syria: Israeli Prime Minister Sharon's office has denied press reports about receiving a Syrian message via Turkey's Foreign Minister Gul calling on Tel Aviv to resume peace talks, says "Zaman." Turkish diplomatic sources said that Turkey had not presented Israel with any written document, but had merely conveyed a verbal message to the US and Israel during Prime Minister Erdogan's visit to the US in January, Zaman notes.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

- A) Iraq
- B) Greater Middle East Initiative

"Two Iraqi Groups Reconciled"

Fatih Altayli observed in the mass appeal Hurriyet (2/20): "The two strongest and most prominent political forces in Iraq, Kurds and Shiites, have been competing with each other, and they used to have different priorities for the future of new Iraq. . The US, on the other hand, intensified its efforts to ensure a consensus among the three major Iraqi groups for the designation of a new constitution, yet the Shiites stood against the US-imposed transition calendar. All of this seems to be changing rather unexpectedly in that Kurdish leader Talabani and Shiite leader Sistani have reached an agreement. According to recent reports, both the Kurds and the Shiites have agreed to work for a separate election process in each other's controlled regions. That means the possibility of a direct national election in Iraq is becoming unlikely because the Shiites and the Kurds have started talking about regional elections. The Sunni region is obviously left out the picture. It remains to be seen what the U.S. reaction to this will be. The general picture, however, is of a de facto situation in which Iraq is moving toward division into three regions."

"Artificial Greater Middle East"

Umur Talu argued in the mass appeal Sabah (2/20): "There is an international marketing push underway for the US Greater Middle East Initiative. The US is trying hard to make it sound realistic by using certain arguments, including democracy, freedom and stability, to justify its plan. The fact of the matter is that this project has some realistic goals but they are not the same as those put forward by the US. The real intention of the US is to establish a mechanism by which to produce market economies and change of regimes through non-democratic means, such as invasion, military coup, and war. The Greater Middle East Initiative is very big project, one that requires an enormous budget to implement. Since there is no way for the US to afford such a large amount by itself, it is lobbying for others, especially NATO, to be involved. In the end, the US will certainly be the big boss and a number of NATO countries, such as Turkey, will have to content themselves with being pawns on a brand new, yet artificial, 'Greater Middle East' map."

"The Greater Middle East Initiative"

Haluk Ulman opined in the economic-political Dunya (2/20): "After President Bush's justification to occupy Iraq proved to be false, recently he has presented a new justification: to free Iraq and the world from a cruel and dangerous dictator and bring democracy to that country. As the presidential elections approach, just to impress his people, and as though he has already solved the governance issue in Iraq and managed to establish a democratic regime in Baghdad, President Bush now talks about introducing a new political and economic order to the Middle East. And he wants to do this with the help of allies whose opinions were of no importance to him in the past. This is 'the greater Middle East initiative' you have been hearing about recently. However, some of the EU countries and Russia, who know from past experience more about these Middle Eastern countries' economic and social structures not being suitable for democracy and who have observed the chaos rather than the promised democracy the US brought in Iraq, do not approach this project positively. Moreover, after witnessing US support for traditional and conservative administrations in the Middle East just for the sake of oil, they do not believe Bush is sincere about this project. However, Bush has created this project and is determined to get others' support. The US and the countries that oppose them will face each other in June during the G8, NATO, US-EU summits. Since the NATO summit will be held in Istanbul, we must follow the developments there closely."

